


UNSW



UNSW Fieldwork Guidelines 2007



 UNSW THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES	Fieldwork Guidelines
UNSW Guideline	
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Front picture courtesy of UNSW School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences.

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This Guideline requires the use of the following forms:

OHS018-2006	Fieldwork Plan and Authorisation Form http://www.hr.unsw.edu.au/ohswc/ohs/docs/frm_fieldwork_plan.doc
OHS009-2006	Fieldwork Authorisation and Medical Questionnaire for Students http://www.hr.unsw.edu.au/ohswc/ohs/docs/frm_fieldwork_medical.doc
OHS010-2006	Volunteer Approval Request Form http://www.hr.unsw.edu.au/ohswc/ohs/docs/frm_fieldwork_volunteer.doc

1 Definitions

Fieldwork is any work, study or research authorised by UNSW and conducted by staff, post-graduate student(s), under-graduate student(s) and volunteers at a site other than the Kensington, Randwick, Manly Vale, Little Bay, University College (ADFA) or Paddington campuses or the Bankstown flight training facility.

Note: Where staff are working on a permanent basis at a remote field station (eg. Fowler's Gap), this is taken to be their normal place of work. Such permanently employed staff are not deemed to be engaging in fieldwork activity.

Remote Fieldwork is defined both in terms of distance and inaccessibility and is that which entails:

- Working more than 5km from a town, farmhouse or other facility with telephone or radio communications (even if personal communications equipment, eg. Mobile phone, is carried);
- Working off-road in areas where very little traffic is likely or where hills, dense timber or other topographic features would make it difficult to summon help, or if medical and other emergency support would be an hour or more away without a vehicle;
- Any work in rivers, on river banks, inland waterways, estuarine and oceanic work sites.

Airborne operations are not normally considered to be Remote Fieldwork activities, although they often extend some distance from towns etc. Safety of airborne operations is covered by Commonwealth legislation and regulations, and only a brief summary of relevant documentation is included in this manual.

Supervisor, in relation to field activities, is the person who has the authority to influence or direct the actions of students or employees involved in the activity. For students this is generally regarded as the academic for whom the student is undertaking fieldwork. The supervisor may not necessarily be present on all fieldtrips.

Leader in relation to field activities is either the supervisor of the group conducting the fieldwork or a specifically designated person authorised by the **Unit manager** to lead the field trip. This person is chosen by virtue of their skills, knowledge and experience in the particular field operation.

Unit manager means the Head of School, Department, Unit or Centre or equivalent position.

Volunteer is a 'pre-recognised' person willing to participate in the fieldwork activities, who is offering their time and services for no remuneration. They are obliged to follow any directions issued by the fieldwork leader in the same way as UNSW participants.

2 Procedures

2.1 Fieldwork Approval and Notification

Fieldwork must have the prior approval of the Unit manager.

Staff and students need to complete a Fieldwork Plan and Authorisation Form (http://www.hr.unsw.edu.au/ohswc/ohs/docs/frm_fieldwork_plan.doc) and submit it to their supervisor or Unit manager during the planning stage. This form will contain the following information:

- proposed itinerary for the fieldwork;
- activities being undertaken;
- reference to an associated and completed risk assessment form;
- estimated times of arrival and departure;
- estimated time in the field;
- exact location of the Fieldwork;
- the number and names of all participants (including any volunteers);
- communication arrangements;;
- identification of special dietary or medical needs.

If there are pre-planned routine fieldtrips which occur on a regular basis the Unit manager may generalize a 'standing order' type notification form which is valid for the calendar year, provided there are no deviations to the details outlined with regard to location, personnel involved and risk assessment. Where conditions change a new fieldtrip plan and notification form should be completed.

The fieldwork plan and notification form is to be accompanied by a completed risk assessment form (see section 6) and both submitted to the Head of work unit for approval.

It is understood that exact details are often planned as the trip progresses and only generalizations can be submitted before the commencement of the trip.

Variation of an itinerary whilst in the field shall be communicated to the supervisor as soon as practicable, especially when it involves a variation in location and/or return times or dates. Fieldwork conducted outside the Sydney metropolitan area requires authority to do so from the appropriate person (usually the Head of School). A local authority to travel form should be completed for each participant and submitted to the School Administrative Officer. This does not apply to a group of undergraduates being taken on fieldtrip activity by their fieldwork supervisor. In this instance the supervisor would complete the authority to travel form for the group.

2.2 Nomination of fieldwork leader

For fieldwork activity organised as part of course-work and involving undergraduates, the academic in charge will be the fieldwork leader. For postgraduates and occasionally honours students, the Unit manager may nominate a fieldwork leader to lead the group. The attributes and responsibilities of fieldwork leader are listed in Appendix 1.

2.3 Assessment of risks

Risk assessments need to be conducted prior to the fieldtrip activity so that all foreseeable hazards can be identified at the planning stage and enable control measures to be put in place in advance to safeguard the health and safety of all participants, the community and the environment. The UNSW Risk Assessment and Control Procedure must be used to identify and control hazards and risks.

2.4 Volunteers

If volunteers will be involved then they must complete a Volunteer Approval Request Form (Attachment 5) and submit it to the Unit manager for sign off. All volunteers should familiarise themselves with any notices produced relating to the field activity and attend any briefing sessions for the fieldwork.

2.5 Notification of Next of Kin

Prior to a field trip, the staff member in charge must submit a list of all participants' next of kin and their contact details, to the Unit manager. This should be retained for the duration of the fieldwork. The fieldtrip leader should also retain a copy and take it along on the fieldtrip.

2.6 Notification of changes to proposed fieldwork

During a field activity, a specified contact person at UNSW must be notified as soon as possible of any changes to the original proposed itinerary or schedule, including changes of dates, location or number of personnel attending the field activity. If the changes will cause a flow-on effect to the existing risk assessment, then a revised risk assessment must be prepared.

2.7 Notification of return from fieldwork

Participants must notify a specified school representative (e.g., their supervisor) on return from the field activity. If a staff member or student fails to return from a field activity at the pre-arranged time and has not notified a change in arrangements, the school representative is responsible for notifying the Unit manager.

The Unit manager or school representative is responsible for notifying:

- emergency services as applicable;
- next of kin of the student.

UNSW Human Resources will notify the next of kin for a staff member, except out of hours when the Unit manager will contact the next of kin.

2.8 Licensing

2.8.1 Motor Vehicles

All drivers of vehicles must have a current vehicle licence that covers the vehicle type being used for the field operation, such as 4-wheel drive, bus etc. See also Section 4 – Vehicle Use.

2.8.2 Boats and Vessels

All drivers of water vehicles in NSW, that are mechanically propelled and are capable of 10 (ten) knots or more, must have a current boating licence issued by the Waterways Authority of NSW. Drivers of vessels in other states must abide by local requirements.

2.8.3 Divers

Divers shall be trained to a minimum level of “Open Water Diver” as described in the UNSW Scuba Diving Operations Manual available at <http://www.bees.unsw.edu.au/school/docs/scubadivingmanual.pdf> and have a current diving certificate.

2.9 Safety Briefing for fieldwork participants

It is essential that the staff and students participating in a field activity attend a safety briefing and that the attendance at the briefing session is recorded. Separate sessions may need to be held for staff and students on undergraduate coursework fieldwork, where there are large numbers involved. Without exception, the briefing must be given before the commencement of the field activity, preferably in the last class before the visit. It should be given by the staff member in charge of the field activity. It should always be accompanied by written safety procedures.

The safety briefing should include, as a minimum:

- the identified hazards of the fieldwork and precautions to be taken to minimise risks to those hazards;;
- discussion of safety equipment required for the various activities that are to be carried out;
- minimum dress requirements;
- requirements to follow all regulatory and advisory signage and traffic regulations;
- requirements to follow all directives from UNSW staff members in charge, site controllers and transport operators (e.g., bus drivers);
- introductions to the First Aid Officers attending the activity;
- emergency procedures;
- hazard and incident reporting procedures.

The safety briefing should also include the responsibilities of fieldwork participants during the recreational aspects of the fieldtrip, ie the participants must be held accountable for their own behaviour in the period when the actual ‘work’ element of the activity has ceased for the day. The disciplinary procedures for failing to maintain conduct in accordance with the UNSW Student Misconduct Rules (<http://www.infonet.unsw.edu.au/poldoc/stumis.htm>) should be outlined.

3 Supervision

3.1 Supervision of Undergraduate Student Groups

When planning a field activity, the staff member in charge should determine an appropriate staff/student ratio. This ratio will depend on the type of activities being undertaken and the risk assessment for the activity. Generally, a ratio of 1:10 is suitable for most situations. A ratio of more than 1:20 is not recommended. Two staff members are highly recommended where the fieldtrip is in remote areas.

Staff in charge of a field activity are to provide students with:

- a copy of the UNSW Fieldwork Safety Guidelines with an explanation of their implications.
- a copy of the Fieldwork Authorisation and Medical Questionnaire Form for Students (http://www.hr.unsw.edu.au/ohswc/ohs/docs/frm_fieldwork_medical.doc).
- fieldwork participants responsibilities as detailed in Section 10.
- an information sheet specific for the field activity detailing organisational arrangements including information about travel, first aid, catering, names of field supervisors, practical pre-requisites for the activity, eg, clothing, sun screen, insect repellent, sunglasses, footwear, weatherproof coat, water bottle, etc.
- a safety briefing. The safety briefing is held at the planning phase. The briefing is an educational exercise aimed at making students and staff aware of foreseeable hazards and risks associated with fieldwork. It should be conducted in such a way that participating students and staff appreciate the need to follow the correct safety procedures.

3.2 Supervision of Honours and Postgraduates

If they have sufficient experience, postgraduate and honours students need not be closely supervised during fieldwork, but generally should not conduct fieldwork alone. If it is not possible for a member of staff to accompany them on the fieldtrip, then a colleague should accompany them. If the risk is low and it is not practicable for anybody to accompany the postgraduate, then a locally approved Buddy system must be in place and signed off by the academic in charge or the Unit manager. The supervisor of the honours student or the class/course director must complete all relevant documentation including the risk assessment.

4 Vehicle Use

4.1 Authority to drive vehicles

Provided that he or she has the appropriate class of NSW licence and has permission from the Unit manager, a staff member, a postgraduate, an honours student, or a volunteer may drive a university vehicle. The Unit manager can also make a decision on whether or not an undergraduate is allowed to drive university vehicles, provided they have a full NSW driver's licence. For off-road use of a 4WD vehicle, the driver should have completed an accredited four wheel drive driving course or be able to demonstrate 4WD competency to the satisfaction of the Unit manager. Similarly, only those persons who can demonstrate competency to the satisfaction of the Unit manager shall be allowed to tow a trailer.

Normal sedans and station wagons are only suitable for bitumen and all weather dirt roads. For all off-road situations including mountainous terrain and desert areas, a four wheel drive vehicle must be used.

4.2 Use of Private Vehicles

Private vehicles should only be used as a last resort. Drivers of private vehicles must be made aware of the following:

- Only a Unit manager or delegated officer can give authority for private vehicle use;
- there may be special requirements, e.g., off-road driving;
- UNSW requirements related to the insurance of private vehicles include a comprehensive motor vehicle insurance policy;
- responsibility for the roadworthiness of the vehicle lies with the owner of the vehicle.

4.3 Maintenance, preparation and vehicle checks

The vehicle should be selected to suit the type of work and terrain that is to be encountered during the trip.

Before the start of a journey, all drivers should be familiar with the vehicle's operation and its equipment, including:

- details of all the vehicle's basic controls and their use;
- its limitations and its capabilities;
- spare tyre, jack, tyre pressure gauge and tool kit;
- emergency spares including fan belt, radiator hose, PVC tape, fuses, spark plugs, engine oil and additional water.
- the fuel-limited range of the vehicle;
- all details of routine maintenance – how to check fuel, oil, coolant, brake fluid, battery, tyre pressure, clutch fluid and power steering fluid, and how to change a tyre;
- efficient, safe and legal loading methods;
- specialty vehicle equipment, such as shovel, axe, winches, etc.

Before a journey, the driver(s) should check that the vehicle has been mechanically maintained and that the luggage and equipment are firmly secured. About one hour into the journey the luggage and equipment should be checked again to see if they have settled and are still secure.

At each fuel or rest stop during the journey, a quick check of the vehicle should be carried out noting that tyre pressures are correct and that luggage is still secure.

During travel, check the engine temperature gauge periodically to forewarn against engine overheating. Each morning check tyre pressures, lights and controls, fuel level, engine oil, radiator coolant and all other fluid levels.

4.4 Time and distance restraints on driving

It is recommended that a driving stint be no longer than two hours before either a change of driver or a half an hour rest period occurs incorporating some light activity e.g., walking.

In preparing and approving field trip plans, researchers (including students), and supervisors (or the Head of the work unit) should ensure that there are adequate rest regimes incorporated into the travelling plans. There should be no need to exceed the maximum driving period suggested unless there is an emergency or extenuating circumstances. Drivers have a greater risk of accident if driving follows an arduous day. For this reason drivers should be well rested before driving.

Approximately 650 km should be set as the maximum distance any group travels by car in any one day. This usually equates to about 8 hours of driving at a safe (and legal) speed. A safe speed relates to many things, including the driver's experience and his/her possible fatigue, the type of road and its condition, the time of day, the weather, and the capabilities of the vehicle itself.

Night driving is much more hazardous than driving during the day. This can be due to driver fatigue, driver stress due to driving on unfamiliar roads and in unfamiliar conditions, and the movements of nocturnal animals. If travel must continue at night, speed should be reduced to suit the circumstances.

4.5 Towing

Towing should not be attempted by anyone who has not undertaken a recognised towing training course unless they can demonstrate towing competency to the Unit manager.

4.6 Vehicle Recovery

In attempting any recovery or repair a vehicle additional risks may exist and the recovery should proceed with caution with personnel who have sufficient experience and knowledge for the task.

5 Personal Safety Considerations

5.1 Working Alone

Normally, when doing fieldwork, persons should avoid working alone. If an accident occurs and there are two (or more) persons present, one person is then available to attend the victim while the other is available to notify emergency services.

If there is a need to work alone because of some special circumstances and the risk assessment deems the activity low risk, the Unit manager may grant permission for working alone. In order to grant this permission, the Head of the work unit must be fully informed of the nature of the work and its location and satisfied that there are adequate provisions and controls in place, including communication arrangements.

5.2 Navigation and Communication Equipment

In determining the requirements for navigational and communication equipment the following should be considered:

- maps
- orientation compass
- Global Positioning Satellite (GPS)
- location of landline phones
- mobile phones
- satellite phone

The risk assessment must address issues such as:

- difficult or unfamiliar terrain
- orienteering training
- lack of distinct landmarks

Communication should be provided between:

- groups/vehicles in the field and the main base camp;
- the main base camp and the School or a nominated communications base;
- the main base camp and emergency services.

Field personnel should make contact on a regular pre-arranged basis. It is highly recommended that daily contact be made with groups working in the field.

5.3 Local area contacts

Fieldworkers must contact local land holders or local company/government personnel when going to a site to seek permission to enter and again when leaving the site.

5.4 Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment

The staff member in charge of the field activity must ensure that the risk assessment identifies all the PPE that will be required for the fieldtrip and that participants are aware that field activity will not take place unless the essential safety equipment is produced (e.g., safety glasses, hats). Students are responsible for obtaining their own PPE. Training in the use of safety equipment should be given before the field activity commences. Safety equipment should also be checked beforehand to ensure that it fits correctly.

It is the responsibility of individual participants to ensure that adequate protection from light, cold, heat and adverse weather is carried and used. This includes:

- hat, sunglasses, lip screen and sun screen, for protection against ultra violet radiation;
- waders preferably with a boot-like sole pattern, or wetsuit for aquatic field activities. Care should be taken when wearing waders in aquatic situations. If there is uneven or boggy terrain or conditions of fast or deep flowing water the waders can fill up with water and increase the likelihood of the wearer sinking or being able to rise. With chest high waders the chest belt must be securely fastened before entering the water;
- rain/windproof jacket where appropriate. A change of clothing should be carried if a person is likely to become wet;
- Life jackets for boating.

Footwear

Bare feet, thongs and sandals are not permitted on fieldtrips. The minimum footwear appropriate for a range of situations would be:

- For immersion in water – thick-soled sport shoes (e.g., runners) or wet-suit boots;
- For wet conditions – gumboots or boots;
- For construction, mines, quarries, etc – solid boots which may include steel-capped toes;
- For other situations – thick-soled sports shoes as a minimum.

See Australian Standard 2210 Part 1 for more details on selection of safety footwear.

Clothing

Loose, baggy clothing and ties are dangerous around machinery as they can become entangled. Well fitting and secured clothing must be worn in these situations. Long hair and jewellery can become entangled in machinery with dangerous results. Hair should be tucked into caps or hairnets and jewellery should be removed.

Long sleeves and trousers should be worn when there is a risk of abrasion, being scratched from low-lying shrubbery, snake bite, insect bite or sunburn.

In cold, wet and windy conditions, cotton clothing may not provide sufficient protection to maintain body warmth, particularly when wet. Wool is recommended, together with thermal underwear to prevent hypothermia.

Specialised safety equipment

The wearing of specialised safety equipment will be required in many field situations. Examples are as follows:

- safety vests – brightly coloured vests with reflective surfaces should be worn in all situations when visibility is a safety issue (eg, anywhere near roads or traffic, or moving machinery), regardless of ambient light conditions;
- hard hats – should be worn in all situations where risk of head injury is present (e.g., falling objects, low headroom, construction sites);
- safety glasses or goggles – should be worn whenever there is a risk of eye injury;
- hearing protection – should be used whenever there is a risk of noise-related injury;
- respiratory protection – should be used where the risk assessment establishes an identified need;
- personal protective clothing and equipment against bushfires where the risk assessment has identified that there is bushfire potential in the proposed area.

Safety equipment should be:

- of approved design (i.e., meets Australian Standards as a minimum);
- of suitable quality for the conditions to be encountered in the field;
- inspected and maintained regularly.

5.5 Food provisions

Food provisions should be suitable for the conditions and duration of the fieldtrip and should include adequate supplies in case of emergency or extended duration.

5.6 Manual Handling

If manual handling is identified as a hazard during the risk assessment process appropriate training shall be provided.

5.7 Electrical Safety

All portable electrical equipment to be used in the field should have been inspected and tagged in accordance with Australian Standard 3760. All field equipment must incorporate a portable residual circuit device (RCD).

5.8 Medical status of persons in the field

Any person with a medical condition that may affect his or her performance on a field trip should discuss the matter in confidence with their supervisor. It may be necessary in some cases to refer the question to the person's medical practitioner.

A Fieldwork Authorisation and Medical Questionnaire for Students (http://www.hr.unsw.edu.au/ohswc/ohs/docs/frm_fieldwork_medical.doc) must be completed. All completed questionnaires are treated as confidential and for the use of the supervisor of the fieldwork only and those for whom it is necessary in the course of their duties.

Staff and students with particular medical conditions that would not be evident in the case of an accident (e.g., allergy to penicillin) should wear 'medical alert' bracelets or pendants.

Adequate supplies of any prescribed medication(s) required for the duration of the field activity must be carried. Approximately 1.5 – 2 times the normal supplies should be packed in case return from the field activity is delayed. This is the responsibility of the person requiring the medication.

Participants should be informed if there is a risk of exposure to venomous animals, insects that can spread diseases, such as Ross River or Barmah Forest Virus, and plants likely to cause allergic reactions. The controls to minimise risk in these circumstances include wearing appropriate clothing, apply insect repellent and carry antihistamine drugs.

Vaccinations against tetanus are highly recommended for all participants in field activities.

5.9 Weather Evaluation

The weather is a critical safety factor on a field trip and must be taken into account in planning a field trip. For example, boats should not be used in poor weather conditions or if poor weather is forecast. Recent heavy rain will affect river water levels. Fog reduces visibility for driving vehicles or boats.

5.10 Fire Risks

Fire in a vehicle or vessel is a possibility and every person should be prepared for such an event. All participants should know where the extinguisher is located and how to use it.

Bush fires are an ever present risk in the Australian bush. All fire restrictions and bans must be observed. To prevent starting a bush fire, all fires must be extinguished properly.

For information on responding to a bushfire contact the Rural Fire Service (<http://www.bushfire.nsw.gov.au>).

5.11 Overseas Fieldwork

The requirements outlined in this document also apply to overseas fieldwork.

In addition:

Notify the appropriate consulate if contemplating fieldwork activity overseas. Also refer to the Department of Foreign Affairs website (<http://www.dfat.gov.au>) for up to date advice regarding the political and security climate of the country in which the fieldwork is proposed to be conducted.

Your local GP should be consulted for information on vaccinations/immunisations required for the overseas country. In addition, check that any medication being taken is not a prohibited substance in that overseas country.

6 Specialist Fieldwork Activities

Certain field activities will require special precautions to ensure the health and safety of those involved. These activities may include:

6.1 Dangerous Terrain

Extra care needs to be taken in situations where there is steepness of terrain, possible rock falls or evident sea wash. Climbing rock faces, overhangs and cliffs requires both a recognised level of competency and the approval of the staff member in charge of the field activity. Fieldwork participants must stay clear of unprotected cliff edges and must not progress beyond any sign warning of dangerous ground. Climbing over fences or barriers placed at such sites is not permitted. Foreseeable hazards involving dangerous terrain should be assessed and controlled in the risk assessment.

6.2 Marine/Aquatic

Staff and students participating in field activities in marine, stream or lake environments, where the work is carried out in deep water, should be strong swimmers or should wear an approved Type 1 or Type 2 Personal Flotation Device (PFD).

There are two types of Personal Flotation Devices in use at UNSW:

- PFD1 – a personal flotation device providing a full flotation support to the wearer. It will also hold the wearer's face upwards in most cases should the wearer be injured or unconscious. It is effective in rough water.
- PFD2 – a buoyancy vest that assists the wearer to float or swim. It is most useful in protected or inland waters.

Personal Flotation Devices will be supplied by the School or Unit undertaking the fieldwork activity.

If swimming is required on a field activity, participants should demonstrate their competency to the staff member in charge before attending the field activity.

6.3 Boating Safety

All legislative requirements involving the use and registration of boats are to be adhered to.

For all University work involving the use of boats, the following guidelines apply:

- At least one of the staff members or students participating in the field activity must have either received training or had extensive experience in the use of any craft that are used. Where appropriate, such persons must check the seaworthy condition of craft, engine reliability and the adequacy of fuel supplies before setting out;
- Advice on local rules, local conditions and weather forecasts should be obtained before each outing;
- All participants must wear appropriate protective clothing and footwear;
- There should be at least two persons aboard the vessel, at least one of whom should be a strong swimmer. One or both should also be competent in life saving techniques;

- Any problems associated with the craft used, e.g., lost equipment or leaks, must be reported to a designated member of staff immediately on return from the trip.

Each time the vessel is boarded, the following should be checked:

- fuel mixes;, spare plugs, cotter pins;
- anchor;
- safety equipment;
- personal flotation devices;
- small bucket for bailing purposes.

In the case of activities aboard vessels not owned by the University, the leader of the field party must satisfy himself/herself as to the capability of the vessel for the task at hand.

6.4 Scientific Diving

Underwater operations will be conducted in accordance with the UNSW Scuba Diving Operations Manual. This manual indicates responsibilities and provides guidelines for the assessment of the safety of all diving operations.

The UNSW Scuba Diving Operations Manual is available at <http://www.bees.unsw.edu.au/school/docs/scubadivingmanual.pdf> from the School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences website.

6.5 Research aboard Vessels at Sea

University staff and students who conduct activities aboard vessels at sea will act in accordance with general fieldwork guidelines, in that:

- A leader will be nominated by the Unit manager;
- A plan and itinerary must be developed by the leader;
- The leader must brief all participants on the plan, including all foreseeable hazards and risks and emergency preparedness.

Boat drivers for small boats and divers must be licensed as required by legislation. A Ship's Master has the responsibility and authority for safety of all personnel on a vessel. The scientific leader carries responsibilities for the safe conduct of the scientific program.

6.6 Airborne Operations

All airborne operations will be conducted in accordance with the Civil Aviation Act (1967) , the Civil Aviation Regulations, the Civil Aviation Orders and the Aeronautical Information Publications as promulgated by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and Airservices Australia.

Operations conducted under the Air Operator's Certificate held by the Department of Aviation will be also conducted in accordance with the Flight Operations Manual as approved by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority. All flights must be approved by the Director of Flight Operations or their approved delegate.

Official copies of the Flight Operations Manual are held by the Head of the Department of Aviation at the Department of Aviation office on the Kensington campus, and by the Director of Flight Operations at the Bankstown Flight Training Facility.

6.7 Working on or near roads

Fieldwork involving traffic or pedestrian behaviour must not impose additional hazards to the public or fieldwork participants. The fieldwork activity must not distract the public, especially vehicle drivers. Adequate and appropriate warning signs must be deployed in accordance with local traffic laws. Participants must wear reflective vests when working on or near roads and other sites where traffic is involved, eg car parks.

7 Hazards and Accidents

7.1 Personal Injury

If in any doubt call an ambulance.

In the event of personal injury the first action to be taken is to ensure the victim is stabilised and made medically comfortable. Then, if the severity of the injury warrants, contact emergency services (Police & Ambulance) giving the number injured, the nature of injuries, nature of accident and the exact location and/or meeting point.

At the accident site, other precautions must be carried out, e.g., smothering any fire(s), removing persons and ignition points from flammable liquid spills. As soon as emergency services have attended the accident, the University and next of kin are to be notified. Upon returning to the University, an Incident and Injury/Illness Report Form (OHS002) available at http://www.hr.unsw.edu.au/ohswc/ohs/docs/frm_OHS002.rtf must be completed.

7.2 First Aid Kit

When working in the field, a first aid kit is an integral part of the supplies. When travelling via a vehicle, the first aid kit may be quite substantial. What is required when on foot or in the field, however, should be limited to that necessary for reasonably foreseeable circumstances. The kit must be durable (case and packing) as it may have to survive and remain sterile in adverse conditions. There are three types of first aid kits available: a Type A, Type B and Type C kit and the risk assessment should determine the type which should be taken on the fieldtrip. The OHS Regulation 2001 specifies the minimum contents for each of the three types of first aid kits.

CONTENTS	First Aid Kit Type A	First Aid Kit Type B	First Aid Kit Type C
Adhesive plastic dressing strips, sterile, packets of 50	2	1	1
Adhesive dressing tape, 2.5 cm 5 cm	1	1	-
Bags, plastic, for amputated parts			
Small	2	1	1
Medium	2	1	1
Large	2	1	0
Dressings, non-adherent, sterile, 7.5 cm 7.5 cm	5	2	-
Eye pads, sterile	5	2	-
Gauze bandages			
5 cm	3	1	1
10 cm	3	1	-
Gloves, disposable, single	10	4	2
Rescue blanket, silver space	1	1	-
Safety pins, packets	1	1	1
Scissors, blunt/short nosed minimum length 12.5 cm	1	1	-
Splinter forceps	1	1	-
Sterile eyewash solution, 10 ml single use ampules or sachets	12	6	-
Swabs, prepacked, antiseptic, packs of 10	1	1	-
Triangular bandages, minimum 90 cm	8	4	1
Wound dressings, sterile, non-medicated, large	10	3	1
First-aid pamphlet as approved by WorkCover	1	1	1

On returning from a field trip, the staff member in charge must advise the first aid coordinator if kits have been used in order to ensure that they are replenished.

7.3 Trained First Aid Officers

The risk assessment should be used to determine the number of First Aid Officers present on a fieldtrip. For fieldwork activities in the metropolitan area, it is desirable to have at least one trained First Aid Officer on board. All field trip parties to non-urban areas, e.g., bush, outback or ocean, should include as many First Aid Officers as practicable and these should be trained to at least Level 2 (Basic First Aid) with additional appropriate modules. The following table can be used as a guide:

Groups up to 10 people	1 person trained in Basic First Aid (Level 2) or higher
Groups of 11 to 30	2 persons trained in Basic First Aid (Level 2) or higher
Groups of 31 to 60	3 persons trained in Basic First Aid (Level 2) or higher, plus an extra trained person for every additional 30 people above 60.

In addition, there should be at least one First Aid Officer with remote area first aid training. Such remote area first aid training is recommended for all First Aid Officers who work in this context.

Whenever practicable, First Aid Officers should not all travel in the one vehicle.

8 Acknowledgements

Monash University – Fieldwork Guidelines 2002
University College (ADFA) Fieldwork Guidelines.
UNSW School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences Fieldwork Guidelines

9 Applicable legislation

NSW Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000
NSW Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001
Civil Aviation (Carriers Liability) Act 1967
Flight Operations Manual (approved by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority)
Marine Safety Act 1998
Maritime Services Act 1935
Protection of Environmental Operations (POEO) Act 1999

National Occupational Health and Safety Commission (NOHSC)
Australian Standards
NSW Anti-Discrimination Act

UNSW Internal Procedures, Guidelines, etc:

UNSW Register of Delegations
UNSW Scuba Diving Operations Manual
UNSW Hazardous Substances Procedure
UNSW Bio-safety Procedure
UNSW Plant and Equipment Procedure
UNSW Working Alone Guideline
UNSW Hazard and Incident Reporting Procedure

In addition, all legislative licensing and permit requirements, as applicable to the fieldwork activity, must be met.

10 Responsibility, Accountability and Authority

10.1 UNSW Executive is responsible for:

- (a) provision of a learning and work environment, including for fieldwork, that is safe and where risks to the health of all members of the UNSW community and visitors and the general public are properly managed;
- (b) ensuring that the Executive and Deans are held accountable for the health and safety performance for their areas of responsibility;
- (c) the allocation of adequate resources to enable fieldwork activities to be undertaken without risk to health and safety and to meet legislative responsibilities.

10.2 Deans and Divisional Unit Executive are responsible for:

- (a) ensuring that the schools, research centres and divisional units are held accountable for the occupational health and safety of all fieldwork participants;;
- (b) ensuring that adequate resources are allocated to the schools, research centres and divisional units under their control who engage in fieldwork activity.

10.3 Heads of Schools, Research Centres or Administrative Units are responsible for ensuring that:

- (a) the occupational health and safety implications of a proposed fieldwork activity are considered at the planning stages;
- (b) any risks associated with the activity are identified and assessed by the supervisor responsible and that the measures used to control such risks are effective and adequate;
- (c) staff and students receive the appropriate information, instruction and training and the necessary supervision to safely perform their work or studies respectively;
- (d) adequate resources are available for safety equipment and materials;
- (e) appropriate licences and permits applicable for the trip have been obtained and are sighted;
- (f) where off-road driving is required that the designated driver has undertaken an accredited off-road driving course or has demonstrated competence to the satisfaction of the Unit manager;
- (g) the requirements related to fieldwork notification and approval and vehicles booking/log system are known, documented and followed by all fieldwork participants.

10.4 Fieldwork Leaders are responsible for:

- (a) risks associated with the proposed fieldwork activity are identified and assessed at the planning stage and that appropriate control measures are put in place to eliminate or minimise such risks;
- (b) the fieldwork activity for which they are responsible, is conducted in such a way so as to safeguard the occupational health and safety of other staff, students, volunteers etc. in their charge with minimal risk to either the participants, the community or the environment;
- (c) the fieldwork environment remains one free of discrimination, harassment or vilification;)
- (d) staff, students and volunteers are instructed in safe and healthy working procedures, warned about particular hazards, and advised how to avoid, eliminate or minimise risks from such hazards;

- (e) good housekeeping standards are maintained whilst on the Fieldwork to safeguard the health and safety of the participants as well as to respect the environment;
- (f) all staff and students under their control use the safety equipment and personal protective equipment provided, in a correct manner;
- (g) all accidents, incidents and near misses are reported and investigated using the appropriate UNSW forms;
- (h) the first aid and emergency equipment provided is adequate and properly maintained and checked prior to each fieldwork activity;
- (i) there is a suitable number of trained First Aid Officers on the fieldtrip;

10.5 Vehicle Drivers are responsible for:

- a) maintenance of vehicle during the trip and maintaining vehicle log books;
- b) prior to departure and if the trip is for more than 1 day, the following regular vehicle inspections
 - tyres including spare (visual inspection of inflation and tread conditions)
 - radiator water levels
 - oil levels (engine, power steering, transmission)
 - brake fluid
- c) obtaining as much information as possible about the conditions that are likely to be encountered during the trip and making provision for them;
- d) informing local authorities (eg. Police) or the property owners of the planned driving itinerary if the trip is in remote locations.

10.6 Fieldwork Participants are responsible for:

- (a) adopting a responsible attitude whilst on the fieldtrip,
- (b) reading any notices produced relating to the field activity, attending any briefing sessions and returning any forms to the staff member in charge;
- (c) seeking instruction if they are unsure of something they are required to do;
- (d) not operating equipment they are unfamiliar with;
- (e) complying with instructions and directions issued by their supervisor and the fieldwork leader;
- (f) taking action to avoid, eliminate or minimise risks;
- (g) avoiding, as far as possible, exposure to venomous animals and plants likely to cause allergic reactions;
- (h) ensuring that adequate protection from sun and cold weather is carried and used;
- (i) carrying sufficient water, minor medical necessities (headache tablets, bandaids) and minor emergency food (e.g., chocolate bar) as supervisors suggest;
- (j) making proper use of all safety devices and personal protective equipment;
- (k) reporting any unsafe conditions or hazards;
- (l) not wilfully placing at risk the health and safety of any person on the fieldtrip or any member of the public by their acts or omissions;
- (m) seeking information or advice regarding hazards and procedures where necessary before carrying out new or unfamiliar work;
- (n) being familiar with emergency and evacuation procedures and the location of first aid kits, personnel and emergency equipment, and if appropriately trained, using the emergency equipment;
- (o) informing the fieldtrip leader of any medical condition or prescription drugs etc. that may impact on their ability to take part in the fieldwork activity;

- (p) not consuming, or being under the influence of, alcohol or non-prescription drugs during any phase of the fieldtrip;
- (q) treating all other field participants and members of the public with courtesy and respect.

10.7 Volunteers are responsible for:

- (a) completing a Volunteer Approval Request Form and submitting it to the Unit manager for approval;
- (b) abiding by all other responsibilities as outlined for fieldtrip participants above;

11 Evaluation & History

This guideline will be reviewed in accordance with the UNSW OHS Management System Review Procedure

11.1 Modifications

Version	Date	Author	Approval	Sections modified	Details of amendments
3	16/08/2002	Martina Lavin	On RMU web site		Document modifications not adequately recorded. May not have been formally approved but was in active use at UNSW.
0.1	01/11/2006	Lindsay O'Keefe	Director, Human Resources	All sections	Revised all sections and reformatted the document
4.0	01/01/2007	Lindsay O'Keefe	Director, Human Resources	11	Added Evaluation & History